

Message Text

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15

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 PC-01 OPR-02 /081 W

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R 021439Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3925

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 3903

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS ET

SUBJECT: DISSIDENCE IN GOJJAM

1. ETHIOPIAN SOURCE OF TESTED RELIABILITY (GOJJAMI) HAS GIVEN US FOLLOWING APRIL 1 ON DEVELOPING SITUATION IN GOJJAM PROVINCE.

2. ACCORDING SOURCE, DISSIDENT ELEMENT HAS ALREADY TAKEN THE FIELD IN GOJJAM, PARTICULARLY IN AREA BETWEEN DEBRE MARCOS AND DAMBETCHA. THESE DISSIDENTS TEND TO BE INDIVIDUALS OF SOME LOCAL PROMINENCE UNDER THE FORMER REGIME. THEY ARE ACTIVELY RECRUITING ADHERENTS IN THE POPULATION. THEY ARE SAYING THAT THE EPMG IS INHERENTLY HOSTILE TO THE ESTABLISHED SOCIAL ORDER IN GOJJAM AND THAT IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE NEW AUTHORITIES WILL SEEK TO TAKE MEASURES TO DESTROY IT. THE FIRST SUCH MEASURE, THE DISSIDENTS' LINE REPORTEDLY GOES, IS LIKELY TO BE AN ATTEMPT TO TAX THE LAND AND ITS YIELD.

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3. ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, MOST GOJJAMIS, WHILE RESPONSIVE TO

THE LINE ABOVE-DESCRIBED, ARE STANDING PAT AND NOT COMMITTING THEMSELVES WHILE THEY AWAIT DEVELOPMENTS. IT IS, SOURCE ASSERTS, HOWEVER, WIDELY AGREED ALREADY THAT IF AND WHEN THE GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS "TO IMPLEMENT LAND REFORM" THE PEOPLE SHOULD CLOSE RANKS TO OPPOSE THE AUTHORITIES. ONE ASPECT OF THIS SITUATION WHICH IS PARTICULARLY POIGNANT, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, IS POSITION OF THE SEVERAL THOUSAND MOSLEM IMMIGRANTS FROM OTHER PROVINCES WHO SETTLED IN GOJJAM SEVERAL YEARS AGO. THESE PEOPLE ARE LANDLESS, AND GUJJAMIS CONSIDER THAT THESE MOSLEM IMMIGRANTS WOULD BENEFIT FROM LAND REFORM AT THE EXPENSE OF CHRISTIAN GOJJAMIS. ONE OF THE INITIAL EFFECTS OF ANY ATTEMPT TO IMPLEMENT LAND REFORM IN GOJJAM, THE SOURCE SAID FLATLY, WILL CERTAINLY BE THE DEATH OF THESE IMMIGRANTS.

4. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY NOTES THAT THE AREA OF POTENTIAL INSECURITY DESCRIBED BY THIS SOURCE STRADDLES THE MAIN ROAD NORTH VIA BAHR DAR AND GONDAR. ACCORDINGLY, IT ANTICIPATES THAT ANY EVOLUTION OF THE SITUATION WHICH WOULD TRANSFORM THIS INCIPIENT PROBLEM INTO ONE OF OVERT CONFRONTATIONS WOULD REQUIRE MAJOR EFFORTS ON THE PART OF THE EPMG TO KEEP THIS ARTERY OPEN.
HUMMEL

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